

Town of Wenham
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Tuesday, January 22, 2013~ 7 PM
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Minutes Approved March 19, 2013

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 7 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room in Town Hall.

With a quorum present, Ms. Martins called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7 pm
Selectmen Present: Molly Martins, Chair; Patrick Wilson, Vice Chair; Ken Whittaker, Secretary
Also Present: Mark Andrews, Interim Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Public information

Agenda

Fire Study Report

Abbreviations

BOS Board of Selectmen

Welcome and overview of Agenda

Statements or Questions by Public

Carin Kale was present on behalf of the Hamilton Wenham League of Women Voters (HWLWV). She requested that in preparation for the annual town meeting the BOS make related documents available on the Town's web site. In consideration of Wenham updating the Town's web page, she added that the LWV advocates for enhanced web sites to include consolidated, tabbed information.

Mr. Andrews gave a brief update regarding the status of the Town's web site saying that the Town received proposals from three vendors; background information has been compiled and will be presented to the review committee in the near future.

Announcements

Mr. Wilson reviewed that Wenham's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) makes a recommendation at Town Meeting, to the voters, for the use of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The deadline for submitting an application was January 8th and presentations were heard on January 15th. The CPC will discuss the applications at the January 29th meeting.

Applications being considered address:

- Debt service for the bond for the historical renovation of town hall
- Historical preservation of town documents
- Cupola repair of the Hamilton Wenham Community House
- Chronicle collection of the Hamilton –Wenham Library
- War Memorial

Mr. Wilson announced:

- A free flue clinic at the Addison Gilbert Hospital on January 23rd
- The MMA Annual Meeting & Trade Show "Pathways to Progress and Prosperity" is January 25 & 26

- Nomination papers are available at the office of the town clerk through February 7, 2013; the deadline to submit nomination papers is February 21st. The last day to withdraw an application is March 8th.

Nomination papers are available for:

- Town Moderator
- Town Clerk
- Selectman
- Assessor
- Tree Warden
- Planning Board
- Board of Health
- Cemetery Commission
- Water Commissioner
- Trustee Hamilton Wenham Regional Library
- Wenham Housing Authority
- School Committee – Nomination papers through the School Department

Old Business

New Business

Fire Study Group (FSG) – Final Report and Recommendation

Present: Study Members Fire Chief Blanchard; Michael Lucy, Finance Committee

Selectman Whittaker and Mr. Andrews were also recognized as part of the FSG and thanked for their work.

The BOS were provided with a copy of the Fire Study Report; the Report is available on the Town's Web Site.

The Fire study Group was formed after the 2012 Town Meeting to identify / research current operational challenges of the Wenham Fire Department and develop cost effective options to recommend to the BOS and residents.

Chief Blanchard stressed that the study does not reflect negatively on the current department. The number of calls continues to increase, while the number of call firefighters available to respond is decreasing. The department currently consists of the Fire Chief working 30 hours, Caretaker of Trucks working 15 hours, Fire Inspector/ Fire Prevention Officer working 40 hours and 27 On-Call Firefighters.

The Fire Study included details of the current model, previous studies, and surrounding town practices.

The following options were outlined in the Study. The FSG unanimously recommended Option One.

Option 1: To add a full time Firefighter, increase the position of the Fire Chief to full time, and alternate shifts so that staffs are staggered to provide longer station coverage during the day, on weekends and holidays.

Budget: \$614,000 - This is an increase to the current budget of \$113,000

Option 2: The formation of a full time department twenty-four hours, seven days a week with three full time firefighters.

Budget \$1,020,000 – This is an increase to the current budget of \$416,000

Option 3: Consideration of a merger for regionalized fire services: For the purpose of the study, the town of Hamilton was identified as a potential merger partner. It was noted that the FSG recognizes that a merger is not a viable immediate short-term response to the departments' needs but rather would most likely require a three to five year period to plan and implement. It was noted that if Hamilton and Wenham went forward with shared services, that Hamilton's budget would increase substantially.

Budget (projected) for Wenham only: \$632,000

Option 4: Makes no changes to the Department and maintains a level budget for FY 14.

Budget: \$501,000

It was noted that these estimates do not include the Fire Department's Capital costs.

Possible Revenue sources totaling \$115,000 were identified to off set the cost of the budget increase including:

- Savings from joining the Regional Emergency Dispatch Center
- Billing Insurance Companies for costs related to an event e.g. motor vehicle accident - It was noted that this practice / policy needs to be voted by Town Meeting.
- Portions of Gordon College PILOT – It was noted that also in discussion with Gordon College are ways to minimize calls for non emergencies i.e. cooking smoke, shower steam
- Penguin Hall Revenues - It was noted that with the opening of Penguin Hall, calls are anticipated to increase by 33%; this is based on the number of response calls to similar senior communities

Chief Blanchard observed that although the consideration for an in-house ambulance service was not in the report, it may be something the FSG would look into further.

The Fire Study Group will monitor the Fire Department for the term of their charge, which is through 2015.

The Chief commented that the management team is constantly reviewing ways to keep the budget down.

In closing, the BOS were reminded that any changes are likely to require contract negotiations with the Firefighters' Association.

Essex County Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC) – Update

Present: Thomas Dubas, RECC Project Manager

Mr. Dubas stated that the Occupancy Permit has been issued for the Dispatch Center building. He presented photos taken at the new center to show the conference room, kitchen, locker room, and electrical room.

Also, included in his update were highlights from FY 14 Budget:

- Employee's salary and benefits: \$1,397,303 (overtime, shift differential, uniform, workman compensation, Project Manager's salary))
- Utilities: \$150,000
- Services: \$289,000
- Other: \$135,000 (insurance, training legal, capital reserve)
- Total budget for facility \$1,971,303
- State support: \$682,927
- Member (town) cost: \$1,288,376 (Wenham, Amesbury, Beverly, Essex, Middleton, Topsfield)
- Per capita \$16.26 - serving just under 80,000 residents and growing at 4000 in population per year:
 - FY 15 - \$1,353,426
 - FY 16 - \$1,418,177

Mr. Dubas informed the BOS that the State has approached the RECC to receive wireless 911 calls originating from Essex County and a predetermined area of Middlesex County. He further explained that currently all wireless 911 calls, within the eastern section of Massachusetts, go through Framingham State Police dispatch center. With 1.4 million calls annually, the Framingham system is at capacity. All calls that are answered in Framingham must be transferred by dispatch to the town/city where the response is needed.

The RECC will receive 911 calls and be able to dispatch directly for those cities / towns that are members of the RECC. All other 911 calls, for non-member communities, will still need to be transferred to that local dispatch center.

The staff for the RECC will be increased from 18 to 45 to cover the 911 calls and will be in a separate room.

Regarding the budget, all items covered by the state will be removed from the budget; the FY15 budget may be substantially less.

The center will be operational by July 1, 2013. Verizon will move the communities into the center at the rate of one per week; this schedule is determined by the Engineers. Mr. Dubas confirmed that Wenham fire and police would have separate frequencies.

At the next RECC meeting, the Board of Directors will address how applications will be accepted / considered from those communities interested in joining the Essex Regional Emergency Communications Center.

Draft Policy Proposal

Ms. Martins suggested that proposed policies for the town be looked at in a broader scope and the discussion of Policies and Procedures be deferred until the BOS have reviewed recent situations and talked to department heads. She noted that the Police Department, as part of its accreditation, recently drafted a policy and procedures and suggested seeking their input.

Review Executive Session Minutes – For release

VOTE: Mr. Whittaker moved the following executive session minutes be released and made public. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- ❖ January 3, 2012
- ❖ February 7, 2012
- ❖ February 21, 2012
- ❖ June 19, 2012
- ❖ July 10, 2012
- ❖ September 4, 2012
- ❖ October 9, 2012

The BOS determined the publication of the following executive session minutes of 2012, would compromise the lawful purpose of the meeting. As such the minutes of the meetings was determined to private and will be withheld them from disclosure at this time:

- ❖ May 15, 2012
- ❖ August 21, 2012
- ❖ December 18, 2012

MINUTES – ES August 21, 2012; ES December 18, 2012; January 8, 2013

VOTE: Mr. Whittaker moved to approve (but not release) the executive session minutes of August 21, 2012 and the executive session minutes of December 18, 2012 as written. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

VOTE: Mr. Whittaker moved to approve the minutes of January 8, 2013 as amended by Selectman Wilson. Mr. Wilson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Martins announced the Hamilton Wenham Regional School Department will present their budget January 30, 2013 at the Library.

The BOS are scheduled to meet February 5th & 26th.

The Finance Committee is meeting every Wednesday through March.

VOTE: Mr. Wilson moved at 8:54 pm to adjourn and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley